



Weight and Nutrition for Indiana Adolescents

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the percentage of young people who are overweight has more than doubled in the last 20 years, and 15 percent of Americans aged 6 to19 years are overweight.

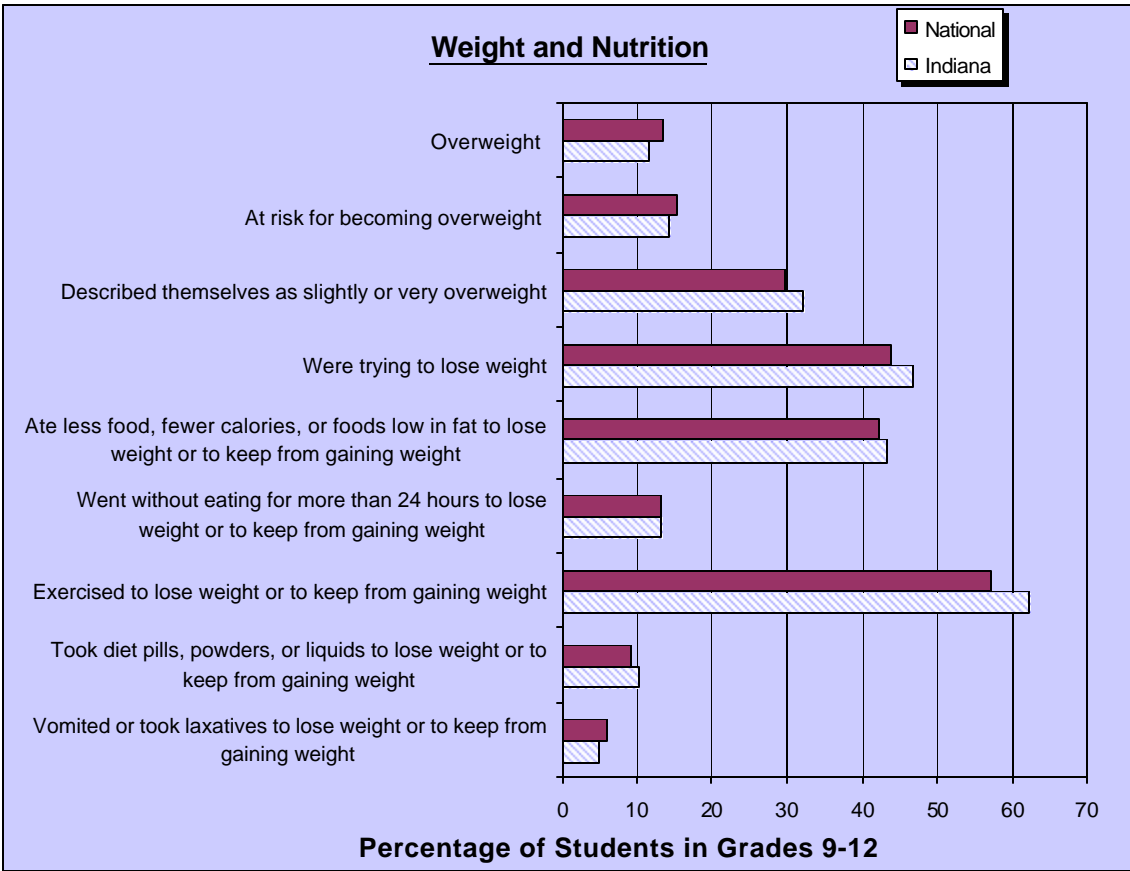
Overweight and obesity acquired during adolescence may persist into adulthood and increase the risk later in life for coronary heart disease, gallbladder disease, some types of cancer, and osteoarthritis of the weight-bearing joints. In adolescence, obesity is associated with a greater risk for high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol.

According to the 2003 Indiana Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 11.5 percent of students in grades 9 through 12 were overweight, and 14.2 percent of Indiana students were at risk for becoming overweight.

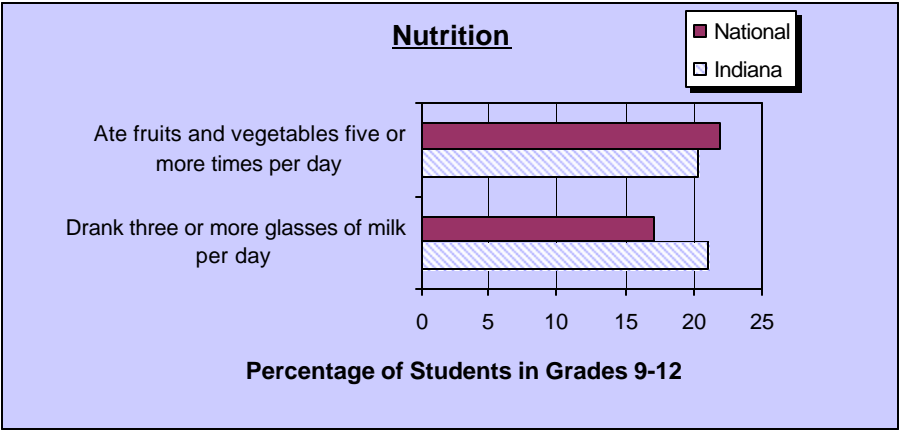
Studies have shown high rates of body dissatisfaction and dieting among adolescent females. Body dissatisfaction encourages many females to engage in unhealthy weight control behaviors, such as fasting and self-induced vomiting, which can lead to abnormal physical and psychological development.

The 2003 Indiana YRBS showed that 32.2 percent of high school students described themselves as overweight, 46.7 percent were trying to lose weight, and 4.8 percent of Indiana high school students vomited or took laxatives to lose weight or to keep from gaining weight.

Below is a graph showing Weight and Nutrition data for high school students in Indiana and the United States.



According to the 2003 Indiana YRBS, 20.3 percent of students in grades 9 to 12 reported eating fruits and vegetables five times per day during the past seven days, and 21.1 percent of Indiana students drank three or more glasses of milk per day during the previous seven days.



Prevention

Fruits and vegetables are a good source of complex carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals, and other substances that are important for good health. Dietary patterns with higher intakes of fruits and vegetables are associated with a decreased risk for some types of cancer.

Milk is by far the largest single source of calcium for high school students. Calcium is essential for the formation and maintenance of healthy bones and teeth. Low calcium intake during the first two to three decades of life is an important risk factor in the development of osteoporosis.

Behavior patterns that lead to obesity start early in life and progress to lifelong habits. Lack of physical activity, unhealthy eating, or a combination of both lead to individuals consuming more calories daily than they use.

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